

Sparrow occurred Mar 31 near Springbrook (Schaffer). Among the most noteworthy of the sparrow records was a Vesper Sparrow observed at Point Breeze, Erie County Mar 2 (Schaffner et al). The first migrant was noted Mar 30 near East Aurora (Nelson et al). Slate-colored Juncos began moving through the area in numbers on the last two days of March. Winter Field Sparrows are usually very rare in this region and their presence is probably one of the best indicators of a mild season. Three were seen at Newfane Dec 20 (Lehrer). On the same day five were observed at Wilson (Schaffner et al) and one occurred at Youngstown (Braunberns). At Wilson, eight were present Jan 10 (Schaffner et al) and three were found there Jan 31 (Klabunde et al). Six were observed near Jamestown Jan 12 (Beal) while one was noted Jan 23 at Grand Island (Schaffner et al). One bird visited a feeding station Mar 5 through 27 at Athol Springs (Csont). One White-crowned Sparrow was observed Jan 1 and 4 at Grand Island (Klabunde, Brownstein et al). Another was first noted Jan 24 at a feeding station in suburban Buffalo and it remained there through March. Two others were reported throughout March from Jamestown (Beal). White-throated Sparrows were more common than usual, at least six individuals being reported during the period. An interesting occurrence was that of a Fox Sparrow at a feeder Dec 1 through 5 at Hamburg (Avery). Another occurred during January at East Aurora while the first probable migrant was reported Mar 30 at Hamburg (Avery). Swamp Sparrows were more common than usual during December and early January, but their numbers dropped sharply thereafter. As many as 14 were noted Dec 14 at Wilson and 12 appeared Jan 2 at Grand Island (Schaffner et al). Song Sparrows were more noticeable throughout the area than in most winters. Lapland Longspurs were noted frequently throughout the period. A definite flight occurred Feb 28 along the south shore of Lake Ontario in Orleans County, with 75 individuals being counted (Schaffner et al). A dead Snow Bunting was picked up Mar 21 from a street in West Seneca. Its leg held a band indicating that it had been banded in Denmark. The unusual Snow Bunting flight same to a very abrupt ending during the last few days of March. Few were found after more normal conditions dominated the weather picture in western New York.

48 Dartmouth Avenue, Buffalo 15

REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

The winter just past broke all records for snowfall, the total being 161 inches. The highest previous fall was 142 inches sixty years ago. The temperature, however, was slightly above average until the first three weeks in March, which set an all-time low for that period with the only three days of subzero temperatures for the winter being recorded during the early part of the month. One of the most severe ice storms on record occurred on December 28-29, doing much damage to trees and power facilities but producing little apparent effect on birdlife. The extremely heavy snowfall seemed to have little adverse effect on the wintering birds, except possibly the Carolina Wren. Several half-hardy species successfully wintered, aided in many cases by increasing numbers of feeders.

Certain species of waterfowl seemed down in numbers, especially Redheads, Canvasbacks, and Ruddy Ducks. The last few days of the period brought good flights of Canada Geese, fair numbers of most regular species of ducks, a good early hawk flight, and a spectacular flight of blackbirds and Starlings. Among the winter birds, Rough-legged Hawks were common, Snowy Owls and Northern Shrikes rather scarce, Redpolls very common, Evening Grosbeaks in fair numbers, and Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins scarce. Lapland Longspurs occurred in small numbers, but Snow Buntings were well distributed.

Loons — Ducks: A Common Loon was seen Jan 2 on Irondequoit Bay (Kemnitzer), and another was observed Jan 17 at Point Breeze (Listman). Two Red-throated Loons were seen Dec 27 at the Irondequoit Bay outlet (Kemnitzer), and two Red-necked Grebes were noted there on Dec 5 (Kemnitzer). Twenty-five Horned Grebes were at the Irondequoit Bay outlet on Dec 5 (Kemnitzer), and six were seen at Canandaigua Lake on Feb 4 (Zeitler). A Pied-billed Grebe was observed Jan 2 at Conesus Lake (Listman, Mitchell), and another was at Charlotte on Mar 27 (Schmanke). Two Great Blue Herons were seen Mar 27 at Braddock's, and four Black-crowned Night Herons were noted at Manitou Beach on Mar 29 (R. Taylor). An American Bittern was at Braddock's on Mar 30 (Dobson). Three Whistling Swans,

seen at Sandy Creek on Mar 30 (Dobson), constituted the first report of the spring migration, and two Canada Geese seen at Manitou on Mar 26 were the first reported for the spring season. This was a very late date. One hundred Canada Geese were seen Mar 27 at Braddock's (Dobson), and numbers rapidly increased from then on. Two Brant seen west of Charlotte on Dec 5 (Listman) were the last of the fall migration. Some 100 Pintail were observed at Braddock's on Mar 30 (Listman). Two Green-winged Teal seen Feb 7 on Irondequoit Creek (Kemnitzner) and three seen Mar 30 at Braddock's (Dobson) were the first of the spring migration. Four Blue-winged Teal at Braddock's on Mar 30 (Listman) were also a spring first. A single American Widgeon was observed at Braddock's on Mar 19 (G.O.S. hike), and 100 were noted in the same place on Mar 30 (Dobson). A Shoveler spent most of the winter on Irondequoit Bay, being last reported on Mar 6. Two were noted at Braddock's on Mar 30 (Listman). A Wood Duck was seen Jan 2 on Hemlock Creek (census), two were noted Mar 30 at Braddock's (Listman), and two were seen Mar 31 at Buck Pond (Dobson). Sixty-four Redheads were counted Jan 17 on Sodus Bay (Foster), but the most seen in the Rochester area through March was five birds. Four Ring-necked Ducks were present at Conesus on Jan 2 (Listman, Mitchell), and ten were seen Mar 30 on Buck Pond (Dobson). Twenty Canvas-back seen Mar 30 at Braddock's (Listman) was the largest number of this species reported during the period in the Rochester area. Two thousand Greater Scaup from Hamlin to Point Breeze on Jan 17 represents a rather high count (Listman, Mitchell) as does a count of 57 Bufflehead on the same day along the east lakeshore (Kemnitzner). Eight hundred Oldsquaw Jan 23 at the Irondequoit Bay outlet (Kemnitzner) was the highest total for the period. The King Eider was recorded three times, Dec 27 at Oklahoma Beach (Kemnitzner), Jan 30 at Hamlin (Listman, Mitchell), and on the Genesee River Mar 19 (G.O.S. hike), a single bird in each case. The highest count of White-winged Scoters was one of 400 birds along the east lakeshore Feb 18 (Kemnitzner). One Surf Scoter was reported Jan 17 at Hamlin (Dobson). Two Ruddy Ducks at Conesus on Jan 2 was the only report of this species (Listman, Mitchell). Seven Hooded Mergansers Dec 20 on Irondequoit Bay (Kemnitzner) was the high count for this species.

Hawks — Owls: Five Sharp-shinned Hawks on Mar 30 (Listman) and three Cooper's Hawks on Mar 27 (Listman) represent the high count of these two species to the end of the period. Fifteen Red-tailed Hawks were observed Mar 27 at Braddock's (Listman). Three Red-shouldered Hawks were noted Mar 19 along the west lakeshore; these were the first reports of the year. Thirty-five Red-shoulders were counted Mar 27 at Braddock's (Listman). Rough-legged Hawks were common all winter, a total of nine being seen Dec 27. A count of 14 on Mar 27 at Braddock's (Dobson) probably represents a migratory movement, at least in part. An immature Bald Eagle was seen Mar 13 at Braddock's (Listman). Six Marsh Hawks on Mar 30 at Braddock's (Listman) represents a spring influx, and 30 Sparrow Hawks on Mar 30 at Braddock's (Listman) represents a rather large flight of this little falcon which usually is not very common in the mixed hawk flights. Seventeen Ruffed Grouse were seen in the Honeoye Lake area Jan 2 (census). A Virginia Rail was noted Dec 27 at Braddock's (Bieber). An American Coot was at Sodus Bay on Jan 24 (Foster), and six were seen at Braddock's on Mar 30 (Listman).

A Killdeer was at Braddock's Dec 20 (Listman), one was present throughout February in Fairport (Clarks), one appeared in Penfield Feb 26 (Mrs. Munson), and 40 were seen at Braddock's Mar 30 (Listman). The first Woodcock was seen along the Parkway on Mar 27 (Dobson). A Common Snipe was seen Dec 27 at the Elmwood Ave. marsh (Starling et al), and one was present at a warm water marsh area at Ling Road from Dec 31 to Mar 19. A Pectoral Sandpiper was seen on the early date of Mar 19 at Russell Station (G.O.S. hike), and there was one at Manitou on Mar 30 (Listman). A very late Dunlin was seen Dec 27 at Russell Station (O'Hara et al).

Occasional single Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were reported during the first two months of the period. A typical example of the subspecies "kumlieni" was seen Dec 27 at Summerville (Moons et al). Bonaparte's Gulls, which usually disappear shortly after Jan 1, lingered in some numbers well past that time, seven being seen Feb 13 at Irondequoit Bay (Starling et al). Twenty Mourning Doves seen Feb 26 in West Henrietta (Foster, Tetlow) was the high count for this species during the period, although the species was present and seen frequently during the entire period. The Snowy Owl was reported three times from the west lakeshore and three times from the Webster area, a single bird each time. A Long-eared Owl was

recorded Jan 14 in Bushnell's Basin (Whites). Short-eared Owls were regularly seen in the Braddock's area with a maximum of seven being reported Mar 13 (Foster). A Saw-whet Owl was seen Mar 19 in the "owl" woods near Manitou (G.O.S. hike).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A Yellow-shafted Flicker was seen Feb 6 at Tryon Park (Miller). A Red-headed Woodpecker was noted at Conesus on Jan 2 (Listman et al), and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen Jan 9 in Durand (Tetlow, Carlson).

One of the rarest birds reported from this area in several years was the Say's Phoebe first seen Dec 13 in Greece by Listman and Lloyd. They had ample opportunity to carefully study the bird under very favorable conditions. They made a complete report of all field marks and conditions of the observation, and so there can be no doubt as to the care used in the identification of this bird. It was again seen Dec 19 in the same area. Although the dates are rather later than might be expected, the area is well suited for a late straggler, being a marshy area with a creek which at the time was unfrozen. This was the first report of this species in our region (Ed — and apparently the first for the state outside of Long Island). Tufted Titmice continued to occur regularly along the east lakeshore, six or more frequenting the McNeth and Sunderlin feeders in the area. Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered in some numbers at Durand and Highland Parks. Two Carolina Wrens were seen at Conesus on Jan 2 (Listman, Mitchell), and two frequented the Sunderlin feeder east of Irondequoit Bay until the heavy snows of mid-February, at which time they disappeared.

From one to three Mockingbirds were regularly reported in the Webster area, and it seems that possibly up to six birds wintered in this section. The birds adopted the habit of spending much of their time sitting on chimneys. A Brown Thrasher was present at the Kennedy feeder in Irondequoit from Feb 13 to at least Mar 26, another was seen in Webster Feb 21 (G.O.S. field trip), and still another was noted Mar 12-14 near Island Cottage Woods (Starling et al). Robins wintered in rather small numbers and appeared late in arriving, numbers being low at the end of the period. A Hermit Thrush was seen in Durand Jan 17 (Dobson) and again Feb 13 (Starling et al), and one was at the Dakin feeder at Bushnell's Basin at least from Jan 25 to Mar 4. From one to six Bohemian Waxwings were present in Durand during the first six weeks of the period, and nine were seen Feb 9 in Brighton (Listman). The maximum count of Cedar Waxwings was 200 seen in Durand and Webster Jan 24 (Listman et al). Occasional single Northern Shrikes were reported, and three Loggerhead Shrikes were seen Mar 30 at Manitou (Listman). An enormous flight of Starlings occurred with blackbird flights late in March with **250,000** being estimated on Mar 29 at Manitou (Listman).

Vireos — Warblers: An extremely late Tennessee Warbler was noted Dec 2 in Webster (Sunderlin and Miller), and a late Orange-crowned Warbler was observed Dec 5 east of Irondequoit Bay (Kemnitzner, Listman). A Yellowthroat was seen at Ling Road on Jan 16 (Listman).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Ten Eastern Meadowlarks were near Mendon Feb 4 (Zeitler). On Mar 30 Bob Dobson made a careful estimate of the flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles during a 90-minute period from 5:30 to 7:00 P. M. He finished with an estimate of 169,500 Red-winged Blackbirds and 91,700 Common Grackles. On Mar 30 Walt Listman estimated 5,000 Brown-headed Cowbirds in the migrating flocks of blackbirds at Manitou. An adult male Dickcissel was seen Dec 1, 26, and 29 at the Munson feeder in Penfield. It was not seen subsequently. Sixty Evening Grosbeaks spent the winter at the Sunderlin-McNeth feeders in Webster, 40 wintered around the Dakin feeder at Bushnell's Basin, and smaller numbers were reported at other feeders. A few were seen occasionally in Durand. A maximum of ten Purple Finches were reported Feb 21 in Durand (G.O.S. field trip). Pine Grosbeaks and White-winged Crossbills were unreported. Two Hoary Redpolls were seen at Conesus Jan 2 (Listman), and one was seen Feb 6 in Webster (Kemnitzner). These were typical examples, and several more birds not as well seen may have been this species. Common Redpolls were found everywhere in flocks ranging up to 250 birds. Many reports were received of this species appearing at feeders, with a top count of 150 to 200 individuals being present at the Sunderlin-McNeth feeders. This is an unusual habit for this species to adopt, as one heretofore never considered the Redpoll a bird that depended on feeders to any extent. In contrast to the abundance of Redpolls, Pine Siskins were scarce. Aside from small flocks around the Haller feeder in Avon and the Cameron feeder in Pittsford, the species was almost unreported. Common Goldfinches were also rather low in numbers.

One Red Crossbill was seen near Irondequoit Bay on Dec 5 (Kemnitzer, Listman), and a flock of 12 was noted that same day in Powder Mills Park (G.O.S. hike). These were the only reports of this species. A Rufous-sided Towhee was noted in Durand Dec 27 (Moons et al), one was seen at Conesus Jan 2 (Listman et al), and two were observed around the Collins feeder near Durand on Feb. 13. Two Vesper Sparrows spent most of February and early March around the Whites' feeder at Mendon. An Oregon Junco was seen Dec 27 at Greece (Corcoran), and one was an irregular visitor to the Munson feeder in Penfield from Dec 29 on. A Chipping Sparrow was seen near Conesus on Jan 2 (Listman et al). The presence of this species so late is very unusual.

A White-crowned Sparrow was observed near Braddock's Dec 27 (Lloyd, McKinney), one was seen at a feeder in Sodus Point Jan 24 (Foster), and one appeared regularly at John Foster's feeder in Rochester from Feb 6 to Mar 19. White-throated Sparrows wintered in much smaller numbers than a year ago; two were seen Jan 16 at Ling Road (Listman), and single birds spent the winter around the McNeth-Sunderlin and Kemnitzer feeders. An unprecedented record was that of a Lincoln's Sparrow which appeared at the Rohner feeder in Greece Jan 3 and remained at least until Mar 28. It was carefully observed by many of the area's birders. Lapland Longspurs were rather scarce, the largest number being six reported Feb 18 in Webster (Kemnitzer). Snow Buntings, however, were well distributed; a flock of 300 seen Jan 24 in Webster (Lloyd) was the high count.

54 Luella Street, Rochester 9

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

Winter weather and birding conditions leave me fumbling for the proper descriptive terms. December and January were actually slightly above normal in temperature, with December quite wet and January moderately so. The moderate, open conditions continued until almost mid-February, with a complete thaw the second week. Then came the snows and the cold. Most of the region received over four feet of snow the last two weeks of February and the first week of March, and the great number of winter finches which had been driven this far south by conditions to the north found their food supply buried. Coupled with this, the month of March produced record-breaking low temperatures almost every day, the monthly average being almost ten degrees below normal. In Etna, for example, I had below zero readings every morning from March 7-17 (minimum of —20) and again several mornings between March 2-25.

While other years have undoubtedly brought as many Redpolls into the region, they have previously remained in the fields where they were well camouflaged in the weed patches. The sudden burying of food, however, drove them to feeders this year. Typical of the unusual situation was the presence from March 17 on of over 100 Redpolls daily at the third floor feeder of the Robert Fickens at an apartment on E. State Street hill in Ithaca. These scrappy, friendly little birds were everywhere — in downtown gutters, on single weed-tops along sidewalks. Others fed along roadsides, and Dilger reported that he saw "many thousands" of them on March 1 between Ithaca and Waterloo. The numbers dwindled north of Waterloo.

Small numbers of Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, and Goldfinches came with Redpolls to the feeders. Horned Larks and Snow Buntings came to feeders in small villages and on farms. Of additional interest is the fact that I had three reports of Redpolls and Snow Buntings "diving into the Snow," hollowing out little burrows, and resting or roosting overnight in these protected spots.

Many Redpolls and some of the other winter visitors were starving by the time they found feeders. Dead birds brought to the Laboratory were exceedingly thin in every case. Many were also hit by cars.

Evening Grosbeaks and Red Crossbills were the other winter finches reported. Waterfowl have been discussed in the body of this report. Montezuma remained iced too late for a March census. The January 17 waterfowl census revealed a drop in divers, with dabblers about normal.

The severe conditions ended on March 27, and migrants, evidently dammed up south of here by snow which extended into southern Pennsylvania, poured into the Southern Tier about three weeks late. The same south wind that brought them in took away the Horned Larks and many of the Redpolls.